

# The role of mentee



The mentoring relationship is mentee driven. The mentee is expected to be open and honest and take responsibility for their development.

The mentoring process is YOUR process and the more active role you can play, the more you put in, the more you will get out of it.

So before you start this course:

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *Is mentoring the right solution for you?*
2. *What do YOU think is involved in being a mentee?*

## How To Write A Good Proposal

A good proposal should give your prospective mentor enough information for them to be able to clearly understand your current situation and what you would like to achieve through your mentoring, without overwhelming them with too much information.

A clear proposal will identify the following:

1. The key challenges you are currently facing – these could be issues related to career choice decisions, job search, interview performance etc.
2. The type of support you are looking for. For example, insight into a career, interview tips, development of a particular skill, etc.
3. What you would like to achieve from the mentoring process.

4. How you would like to communicate and how often
5. The amount and level of support you are looking for.
6. Why you think you think you would make a good match?

*Think about the following questions:*

- *What are the key challenges that you are currently facing? – these could be issues related to career choice decisions, job search, interview performance etc.*
- *What type of support you are looking for?*
- *What you would like to achieve from the mentoring process?*
- *How you would like to communicate and how often?*
- *What amount and level of support you are looking for?*
- *What are you looking for in a good match?*

## Your first discussion



The relationship that evolves between you and your mentor over a period of time is crucial to the success of the mentoring journey. Although you will control what you get out of the relationship, your mentor is the guardian of the relationship because of their experience and knowledge.

**Your first meeting is vital because it will set the tone of the relationship.  
Ideally, this will get off to a swift and productive start.**

You might feel a bit nervous about your first discussion but don't worry about it – a lot of people do.

**Remember: if you don't hit it off straight away, don't panic. It takes time to build a relationship and it will get easier the more you interact because you will build trust and get to know each other.**

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *What are your expectations of your first discussion?*
2. *Are they realistic?*
3. *What can you do to maximise the effectiveness of that first discussion?*

## What is the first discussion for?

Try to cover your goals and ambitions in relation to:

- Particular issues you face
- Your achievements so far and how to build on them
- Realistic expectations
- Scale of priorities
- Areas in which you would find input most useful

You should also cover a few basic elements

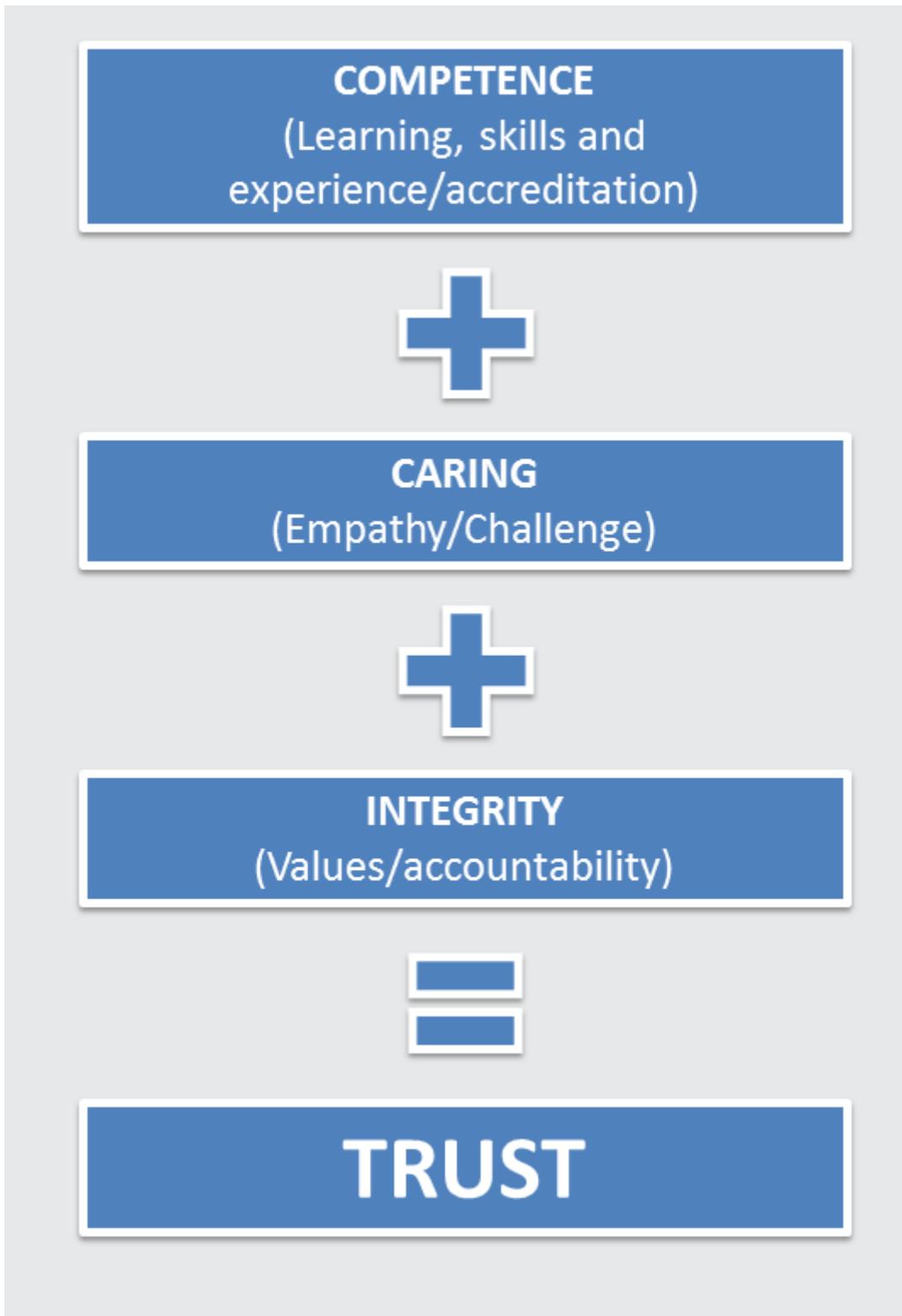
- When you would like to meet – how often and for how long
- How your discussions will take place – face to face, telephone, Skype or email.
- How you will keep in touch and how you will remind each other of future discussions
- Confidentiality
- Responsibility
- How you will record progress and issues/targets for further development.

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *What are the issues that are important to you?*
2. *What are the areas in which you would find input most useful?*
3. *How will your discussions take place?*
4. *How you will record your progress and issues?*

## Building trust





*Think about the following questions:*

- 1. What can you do to build trust with your mentor?*
- 2. What do you expect your mentor to do to gain your trust?*

# Communicating with your mentor

If you are meeting your mentor face to face you need to be aware of body language. This is an excellent indication of how people really feel and makes up a large proportion of the message they send.

If someone is being less than honest, their body language will usually give them away.

A lot of body language is universal, but some gestures differ between cultures so be careful not to give (or take) offense unwittingly! Take great care to recognise how cultural diversity influences all aspects of verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

To "read" body language:

- . Learn what to look for.
- . Recognise people's body language so you can "read" them better.
- . Recognise your own body language.
- . Control your own body language and use it to your advantage so you give the right message to other people.

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *Are you conscious of your own body language?*
2. *Try observing your peers' body language: what does it tell you?*
3. *Ask your peers to observe your body language: what does it tell them?*

# Confidentiality



Confidentiality underpins the mentoring relationship. Everything discussed in the mentoring session is confidential. The exceptions are when legal obligations compel the mentor (or the mentee) to report any criminal activities, any misconduct, or any potential danger. This should be made clear at the start of the relationship. Where for the benefit of the mentee the mentor feels obliged to raise a concern they should seek permission from the mentee before doing so.

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *Which areas of your life do you wish to discuss?*
2. *Which areas of your life do you definitely do NOT wish to discuss?*

## Twenty questions

Here are 20 questions that a mentor may ask you – or you may want to think about yourself.

1. What will give you the most value from today's session?
2. What do you want to focus on today?
3. What is keeping you awake at night?
4. What is your present situation in detail?
5. What is working well?
6. What is happening that tells you that you have a problem?
7. What do you have control over?
8. What strengths and resources do you bring to this situation?
9. Where do you want to be a year from now? How will you measure your success?
10. What would your solution be?
11. What do you not know about this situation/project? How could you find out?

12. If you improve one thing you do, what change would make the biggest improvement to your performance?
13. What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
14. What do you enjoy about what you do?
15. What might you be overlooking?
16. Has anyone else done this before?
17. What have you learned from this?
18. What will you do differently next time?
19. What did you do well?
20. What will you do next?

*Think about the following question:*

1. *Which other questions do you want help with, that aren't on this list?*

## Building rapport with your mentor



- Taking time to build rapport with your mentor will help you to get the most from the mentoring relationship.
- Rapport comes from shared values or experiences, and sometimes from a 'chemistry' that is hard to define.
- One sign that there is comfort or rapport between two people is that they have similar tone of voice, body language, movement and so on.
- Next time you're in company watch other people talking together. Look for examples of similarities or 'synchronicity' between them. Ask yourself:
  - Are their body postures similar?
  - Do they use similar hand movements?

- What do their faces tell you, especially their expressions?
- Do their moods seem similar?
- How similar are their voices?

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *Which values or experiences are important to you?*
2. *How do they affect your interactions with other people?*

## So Why Use A Mentor?



A mentor is someone who has business or professional experience and who acts as a trusted confidante over a flexible period of time. It is a relationship in which your mentor shares their personal knowledge and experiences and promotes a self-discovery approach.

You can expect your mentor to:

- provide an outside perspective on you and your career options
- listen, in confidence, to the things that are worrying you about your career choices
- help you by sharing their own experience of failures and successes
- give you friendly, unbiased support and guidance
- provide honest and constructive feedback
- be a soundingboard for your ideas
- help your decision-making by suggesting alternatives based on personal experience
- provide on-going support and encouragement.

Remember – it is not your mentor’s responsibility to make your career a success; the ultimate responsibility for making your career successful is down to you.

*Think about the following questions:*

1. *What do you want a mentor for?*
2. *Based on the list above, do you think they can help? If so, why?*

**And here's some things not to do!**

**Here’s a take on how not to do it!**

- Bring to the first formal meeting a long shopping list of things you want the mentor to do for you.
- Expect the mentor to be available for you whenever you want them.
- Expect the mentor always to have an answer.
- Expect the mentor to decide when to meet and what to talk about.
- Boast about the relationship to your colleagues at every opportunity.
- Always assuming the mentor knows best.
- Blame the mentor whenever advice doesn’t work out
- Treat mentoring sessions as mobile, the easiest item in the diary to change at the last minute.
- Enjoy the opportunity to have a good moan or whinge whenever you meet, especially if no-one else will listen to you.



*Think about the following questions:*

1. *OK, admit it, how many of these behaviours were you were planning to adopt?*
2. *What can you do to prevent you from forming bad habits such as these?*

# What have you learnt about the role of a mentee?

To complete this course, please ask yourself:

What have I learnt?

How can I apply it?

What do I need to do next?